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Beef IS PLENTIFUL— VEGETABLES, TOO!



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Beef is in plentiful supply -- and vegetables, too! What's more, both are expected to continue abundant through the rest of the summer, and on into the fall months.

Because of these plentiful beef supplies, the livestock and meat industry is sponsoring a special promotion program -- starting immediately, and continuing until Thanksgiving. And the vegetable industry is cooperating to promote a combined beef-and-vegetable campaign during the period from September 30 through October 9.

Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson has endorsed these industry promotions, and has urged food trade organizations to give them full support. In doing so, he expressed confidence that the cooperative efforts will do much to help solve the marketing problems of both industries.

Secretary Benson also has pledged the full assistance of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The Department will aid the merchandising efforts through continued work with food trade groups throughout the country. And its informational and educational activities will be used widely to further the program.

To carry the news to homemakers, help is needed from food editors of newspapers and magazines, and women's program directors for radio and television stations. This fact sheet has been prepared for use by these and other groups who write copy for consumers.

Marketing specialists in the Department give this picture of the supply situation:

Beef Supplies

The amounts of beef available to each of us, this year, will be larger than ever before. Consumption will be even larger than last year's peak of 76.6 pounds per person -- which was the largest up until that time, and much larger than in other recent years.

Why are beef supplies so generous now? Primarily, because cattle herds on our farms and ranches have built up to record numbers. At the first of this year, cattle and calves reached a total of almost 95 million head -- a gain of 23 percent since 1949, which was the low point of the present cattle cycle.

Gains in meat production have followed this increase in the cattle herd. In 1951, cattle and calf slaughter was only 26 million head. Last year, it jumped to almost 37 million head. And this year, slaughter is increasing again -- to reach a total of more than 39 million head.

During the first half of this year, slaughter of all cattle was 10 percent larger than in the same period a year ago. Slaughter of heifers was 28 percent larger, and cows 33 percent larger. For the rest of this year, slaughter is expected to continue around the high levels of a year ago.

Supplies of all beef will be plentiful during the fall months, with especially good supplies of the moderately-priced grades. That's because marketings of grass-fed cattle have started to increase, and will continue to gain seasonally through the fall. These are cattle raised on pasture and range, principally in the West, South, and Midwest.

Beef from these grass-fed cattle is mostly of the intermediate grades, which carry less fat than the higher grades. In retail markets, this beef largely is in the Commercial or Good grades, occasionally some in Utility grade. Beef of these grades is just as nutritious as that from the higher-priced grades, and -- when properly prepared -- makes very acceptable meat dishes.

Vegetable Supplies

The beef-and-vegetable campaign has been scheduled to take full advantage of the harvest peak for most hardy vegetables. Supplies of potatoes, onions -- and other vegetable ingredients of beef stews, pot pies, and similar combinations -- are expected to be plentiful as markets receive shipments from States which harvest late in the year.

Potato production in these "late" States -- the main source of supply during this September 30-October 9 period -- is expected to be down 5 percent from last year. But last year's supplies proved excessive, and the slightly smaller quantities available this year should provide amply for all market needs.

Onion supplies should prove fully ample. Carrot supplies are expected to be generous. And good supplies of turnips and other stew-making vegetables are traditionally available during this harvest-time period.

Campaign Timely

In scheduling this beef-and-vegetable campaign, primary consideration was given to the anticipated supplies of beef and vegetables. But demand considerations were given careful attention, too. And a period was selected when consumer interest can best be stimulated -- when appetites jaded by summer's heat will be revived and ready for savory beef stews, beef pot pies, and many more tempting beef-and-vegetable combinations.

Beef Products Featured

This beef-and-vegetable campaign will be the high spot of a beef promotion drive that the livestock and meat industry has developed to extend through the fall months. During that time, definite periods have been established in which various beef products will be featured. Here is the schedule:

Now until September 30	... hamburger and beef sausage
September 30 through October 9	... beef-and-vegetable combinations
October 14 through October 23	... ground beef
October 28 through November 6	... roasts and pot roasts
November 11 through November 20	... chopped beef

Savory and Nourishing

Beef is the most popular of main dishes -- a tribute to its satisfying flavor, and stick-to-the-ribs qualities. And, in main dishes, potatoes and other vegetables are a sturdy combiner. In combination main dishes, a high place on the popularity poll goes to rich brown beef stews, with potatoes or dumplings.

Beef is an important source of the proteins that are essential for building and repairing tissues. Beef has this important attribute -- it can enhance the value of foods containing incomplete proteins. When beef is eaten at the same meal with protein-rich vegetables, these foods become more valuable as sources of protein. Lean beef is also a valuable source of B vitamins -- and of the minerals, phosphorous and iron. Pound for pound, lean beef has more protein and other nutrients than beef of higher grade -- and fewer calories, too.

Potatoes, too, pack plenty of good food value. They provide some of the B vitamins, iron and other important minerals, some vitamin C, and starch. Root vegetables bring vitamins, minerals, starches, and sugars. Carrots rate special mention for their vitamin A value. Turnips help to fill the daily vitamin C quota. And onions, of course, are the world's most popular seasoning. There's no limit to the variety that you can inject in beef and vegetable combinations -- and eating a variety of foods is good nutrition insurance.

Buying Beef

Retail stores will feature a wide variety of grades and cuts of beef. In making a selection among the many available at her meat counter, the consumer can get help from the U. S. Department of Agriculture grades for beef -- a guide to meat quality. The Federal grade stamp in the form of a shield enclosing the grade name is applied in purple ink on the carcass by a roller -- so that it appears, ribbon-like, along the carcass, on practically all retail cuts. The highest quality grade is USDA Prime, followed in order by Choice, Good, Commercial and then Utility grade.

The Federal grade stamped on beef is a yardstick of its quality. It will enable the consumer to use the meat most efficiently, by preparing it in the way for which it is best suited.

Another consideration in buying beef is the "cut" -- a reference to the part of the animal from which the meat comes. And the buyer can often save money by using the less tender cuts of beef.

Cooking Beef

Cooking beef is a challenge to a homemaker's skill, and surprising goodness comes from the less expensive cuts and grades. If prepared right, they're just as full of food value, and every bit as tasty as the higher-priced steaks and roasts. But they take more time and more care in the cooking.

The secret of success in cooking less tender cuts is to cook them longer, with added moisture and a cover. But keep the amount of added liquid to a minimum -- for tenderness, as well as good texture and flavor. The "braising" method of cooking consists of browning the meat in fat, then cooking it slowly in a covered pan, with or without added liquid, to the well-done stage. For stews and soups, cook the meat slowly in a small amount of water. It is usually browned before the liquid is added for stews and brown stock, and cooked without browning for light soup stock.

Less tender cuts may also be cooked under pressure. The meat cooks in a much shorter time, and retains about the same amounts of nutrients as when braised or stewed.

Freezing, Canning Beef

Families with home freezers may find this a good time to stock their freezers with beef, and many retailers are making special offerings for that specific purpose. Proper storage of beef is important. Frozen beef, properly wrapped and stored at 0°F may be held in a frozen condition for a considerable length of time.

Freezing combination dishes provides another way to use beef supplies. Directions for freezing a beef pie and a cheese meatloaf are included in a new Department Home and Garden Bulletin No. 40, "Freezing Combination Main Dishes."

Canning beef and vegetable stew is a handy way to use some of the less tender cuts. Full directions are given in the Department's Home and Garden Bulletin No. 6, "Home Canning of Meat".

Additional Information

Additional information will be supplied to food editors and broadcasters by livestock, meat and vegetable industry organizations taking part in these campaigns -- and by offices of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Further background and recipes for using beef and vegetables are included in the following publications. Single copies are available without cost from the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

Beef - Facts for Consumer Education, Agriculture Information Bulletin 84. Roundup of facts on nutritive value, market information, selection, use, other topics.
Family Fare, Home and Garden Bulletin 1. Suggestions for buying, storing, and preparing beef.

Fruit and Vegetable Buying Guide for Consumers, Home and Garden Bulletin 21.

Quality factors in fruits and vegetables.

Meat for Thrifty Meals, Home and Garden Bulletin 27. Recipes for meat, including beef, and tips on buying and storing.

Root Vegetables in Everyday Meals, Home and Garden Bulletin 33. How to use them.

Money-Saving Main Dishes, Leaflet 289. Recipes and suggestions for hearty, economical main dishes.

U. S. Grades for Beef, Leaflet 310. Using Federal grades to buy beef.

